

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Bruce Braley (IA-01) sent a letter to President Obama calling on him to review current Department of Defense policies that deal with sexual assault and domestic violence and use his authority to implement provisions of Braley's recently introduced Holley Lynn James Act.

"Military studies and news reports suggest that the rate of sexual assault in the military is unconscionably high, and that as many as one in three military women experience sexual assault during their career in the service. That's unacceptable," said Rep. Braley. "I want to make sure the President recognizes the need to address this crisis, to ensure that charges of sexual assault and domestic violence are treated seriously, and that the rights of victims are protected."

Last month, Rep. Braley introduced the Holley Lynn James Act to improve the oversight of sexual assault and domestic violence policy in the military. The bipartisan bill is named after Holley Lynn James, a constituent of Rep. Braley who was killed by her husband while both were in the service. James had filed complaints against her husband, who was supposed to be restricted to his barracks the night he murdered her.

Reports from the Government Accountability Office suggest that the Department of Defense still has difficulty in tracking and reporting domestic violence cases and has inconsistent practices in addressing these cases.

Rep. Braley also recently introduced the bi-partisan Support for Survivors Act that would require the military to preserve records connected with cases of sexual trauma and assault.

A copy of Rep. Braley's letter is available here: <http://braley.house.gov/images/stories/PDF/Braley.Obama.Letter.05022011.pdf>